



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

SOME GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF CALIFORNIA.

BY J. A. JOHNSON.

With a map of the United States thrown upon the screen, the lecturer first contrasted the size of the state of California with that of the states occupying the same parallels of latitude on the Atlantic coast, showing that it takes the states of Connecticut, Rhode Island, a third part of New York and Pennsylvania, the whole of New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland, the greater part of Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, and a portion of Georgia to make one state the size of California on the eastern coast of the Union. California was about 700 miles long by 200 miles wide, being nearly a third larger than Italy, and but little smaller than Spain or France. It possessed a vast variety of soils, productions, climate and scenery, with strongly-marked geographical features. With the map still before the audience, he then gave a general description of the state. There were six great natural divisions of its territory; the northern two-thirds consisting of the Sierra Nevada range of mountains, the great central basin of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers, and the Coast Range of mountains, with its foot-hills on the coast; the southern third-part, divided nearly in the center from north to south by the San Bernardino mountains, with the Mojave and Colorado plains on the east, and the great valleys or plains of the Los Angeles, Santa Anna, and other rivers on the west.

The Sierra Nevada range is about 60 miles in width, on an average, and nearly 500 miles in length, and occupies the eastern side of the state. The great back-bone of this range is granite, gray in some portions, light yellowish in others, as at the Yosemite and elsewhere. The elevation of this range varies from 5,000 to 8,000 feet. There are many lofty peaks, some of them 13,000 and 14,000 feet high. The western slope comprises more than seven-eighths of the entire range, the eastern slope being abrupt and broken, and terminating upon a great basin having an elevation of 3,000 to 4,000 feet above the sea-level. The western slope is mostly covered with timber, the famous coniferous trees growing on the upper slope, from a height of 6,000 feet on down to 2,500 feet, and from thence to the valley the nut-pine, the oak, and the manganita are found. The most valuable gold mines are located on this western slope, at an elevation of 2,000 to 6,000 feet, and covering an area about 40 miles in width and 200 miles in length; but gold mines are also found in many other parts of the state. The auriferous lodes which have been mined at a profit are all of quartz, the veins varying in thickness from one inch to 30 feet, usually running parallel with the range and dipping toward the east. The silver mines occur mainly on the eastern slope, and in Nevada on the east. In the foot-hills of the western slope are found a great variety of valuable building stones. A fine white marble, nearly equal to the best statuary marble, and a very beautiful mottled and striped marble, closely resembling the famous stone known as Mexican onyx, also some very fine gray limestone and excellent slate, are found in these foot-hills. The lower third-part of this western slope, usually called the foot-hills, is destined to become the great fruit-belt of the State, though at present it is little prized and has only been cultivated in patches; the fruit is uniformly excellent and equal to the best produced in the State. The climate of this region is excellent, and is only surpassed by that of the more favorite localities of the southern coast-counties.

The great central basin of the State, the united valleys of the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers, averaging about 50 miles wide and 400 miles long, and lying between the Sierra Nevada and the Coast Range mountains, may be called the wheat-field of California, though all the other cereals are produced there, as well as in other parts of the State. The soil generally is a sandy loam, though clayey soils are found all over the valley. The climate is hot in summer and subject to moderate frosts in winter.

The region of the Coast Range is a very important portion of California, for there are found the great dairies, the finest stock-farms, and the best orchards and vineyards. This range is from 20 to 40 miles wide, and 500 miles long, with an elevation ranging from 2,000 to 4,000 feet, the summits and northern slopes only being covered with forests. In many places the foot-hills on the western slope of this range terminate at the seashore, and in other places upon delightful little valleys of great fertility and beauty. The famous red-wood forests of California are located in the Coast Range, as also are the celebrated quick-silver or cinnabar mines.

Passing to the southern third-part of California, one finds the eastern half of it in the valleys of the Mohave and Colorado rivers, an arid waste of sandhills and plains, relieved from absolute barrenness in places by patches of mezquites, with now and then a cluster of yucca or palm trees. The San Bernardino range has an elevation ranging from 3,000 to 6,000 feet, and a width varying from 10 to 20 miles, and is about 100 miles long. The summits and northern slopes are well wooded in parts of the range, but the southern slopes are generally quite barren, the foot-hills being covered with shrubs or grass. In the great valleys or plains lying between the mountains and the ocean are found the orange-groves and vineyards of southern California, and the chief towns of this district. Here, too, are the noted apiaries of the state, and on these plains, and in the adjacent foot-hills, are the best sheep-walks in California. Gold is found in the San Bernardino range, and in the San Diego mountains. A valuable tin mine has been opened in the Temescal mountains in the southern part of San Bernardino county. The climate of the southern coast-counties is the best in the state; the northern coast-counties being much cooler and more humid.

The lecturer then exhibited a large number of stereopticon views of the country, and particularly of southern California, which had been taken for his own use by an artist who was thus engaged eleven weeks in this part of the state. These views illustrated the grazing, farming, and fruit-growing industries in San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, and San Diego counties. Views of the chief towns and villages were also exhibited, and a brief description of each was given.